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ABSTRACT

Effective management of human resources in any organization includes providing an environment that is conducive to the satisfaction of basic needs in the workplace. This concept has been increasingly embraced by business and industry and to a lesser extent in academia. One group considered vital to higher education, whose needs have been ignored, are academic department chairpersons. The perceived needs fulfillment of 114 department chairpersons at 13 four-year colleges in Puerto Rico was examined, as was the relationship of those perceptions to selected demographic factors and to four organization environmental characteristics that relate to whether the institution is public or private. An important finding was that unlike "middle managers" in non-academic settings, the department chairpersons perceived their least fulfilled need to be security, the lowest level of need according to Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs. Significant differences were also found between the perceptions of department chairs in private and public colleges regarding such environmental characteristics as collegiality and participation in decision-making. The implications of these findings for effective institutional goal achievement are addressed. Contains 44 references. (Author/KM)

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NEEDS FULFILLMENT OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AT FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES IN PUERTO RICO

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This paper was presented at the Twenty-Eighth Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research held at the Hyatt Regency Phoenix Hotel, Phoenix, Arizona, May 15-18, 1988. This paper was reviewed by the AIR Forum Publications Committee and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC Collection of Forum Papers.

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ABSTRACT

Effective management of human resources in any organization includes providing an environment that is conducive to the satisfaction of basic needs in the workplace. This concept has been increasingly embraced by business and industry and to a lesser extent in academia. One group considered vital to the higher education enterprise whose needs have been ignored, are academic department chairpersons. This study identified the perceived needs fulfillment of department chairpersons at four-year colleges in Puerto Rico and examined the relationship of those perceptions to selected demographic factors and to four organization environmental characteritics that relate to whether the institution is public or private. An important finding was that unlike "middle managers" in non academic settings, the department chairpersons studied perceive that their least fulfilled need is security - the lowest-level need according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. The study also found significant differences between the perceptions of department chairs in the private sector and those in the public sector regarding such environmental characteristics as collegiality and participation in decision making. The implications of these findings for effective institutional goal achievement are addressed.

NEEDS FULFILLMENT OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AT FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES IN PUERTO RICO

Introduction

This study addresses the conventional wisdom that effective management of human resources in academia, as elsewhere, mandates the satisfaction of basic human needs in the workplace. Indeed, organization theorists agree that a major challenge of effective leadership today is to create a working environment that is conducive to the achievement of organizational goals as well as individual goals (Owens, 1981; Naisbitt, 1982; Hersey & Blanchard, 1982; Peters & Waterman, 1982). The incompatability of the two goals, unless adjusted, leads to lower performance levels, increased turnover, and general discontent - an intolerable malaise for any organization, but with alarming consequences for institutions of higher education that generally labor with limited economic resources and are held accountable to a broad constituency.

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) state that many organizations fail to provide an environment that is conducive to workers' needs because leaders are unaware of the needs of their subordinates. These researchers replicated a study several times where they compared the needs which groups of workers perceived as unfulfilled with the perceptions that their supervisors had of the workers' unfulfilled needs. Each time, the needs that the workers perceived as unfulfilled were exactly the needs that the supervisors perceived as least important to the workers. To the end that presidents and deans in Puerto Rico's four-year colleges might gain some insights that will enable them to provide an appropriate environment for satisfying the needs

of an important group of professionals at their institutions, this study sought to identify the perceived needs fulfillment of department chairpersons and to analyze various factors that influence those perceptions.

The interest in improving the working environment of individuals is not a new concern. Early in the twentieth century, Marxists and socialists in Europe were analyzing the phenomena of worker alienation and powerlessness and in the United States, industrial psychologists observed interpersonal relations and group morale (Koch, 1981). While the European interest had an ideological base, American efforts were motivated by a desire to increase production. After World War II, however, the focus shifted to other concerns, such as: 1) the impact of technological changes on the working environment; 2) the persistence of certain working conditions that are inconsistent with basic democratic principles; and 3) improving the quality of life, including the worklife. (Barbash, 1976; Kanter, 1978; Takezawa, 1982). As a result, during the 1960s and 1970s research on job satisfaction increased dramatically - in the United States as well as other parts of the world.

Since the subject has to do with human behavior, not surprisingly, most of the research on job satisfaction/dissatisfaction has been conducted by behavioral psychologists. At first, the behaviorists were reluctant to study the concept because its dimensions could only be measured through attitudinal surveys and they believed they were risking psychology's status as a science if they studied nonobservable behavior. Gradually, however, they began to investigate subjective phenomena such as needs and drives and developed motivation theories - which propose that human behavior is rooted in the satisfaction of basic needs - to explain human behavior in different life situations, including the workplace.

By the 1970s, several job satisfaction/motivation theories could be identified. The most prominent of these are: 1) the hierarchy-of-needs theory (Maslow, 1954); 2) the two-factor theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959); and 3) the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964). A close look at these theories and their variants reveals that the concept of need fulfillment - an idea developed by Abraham Maslow - is an important element in all of them. Maslow suggested that men and women seek to satisfy a hierarchy of needs in the following order: 1) physiological, 2) security, 3) affiliation, 4) self-esteem and 5) self-actualization. As the lowest level need (i.e. physiological) is satisfied, the next lowest level need (i.e. security) motivates behavior and so on until the person seeks to satisfy the highest level need (self-actualization).

Although Maslow did not address the concept of job satisfaction directly, he suggested that the reason people join an organization, stay in it, and work towards its goals, is to satisfy the hierarchy of needs. Later theorists classified the five needs into two categories - lower and higher order needs. Their studies indicate that the lower level needs are satisfied by extrinsic factors such as salary, tenure, relationships with coworkers, and the higher level needs are satisfied by intrinsic factors such as feelings of belonging, achievement, recognition, and having control (Chung, 1977).

The message that comes through loudly and clearly from the thousands of post World War II studies on job satisfaction/dissatisfaction, is that men and women do not work merely to satisfy lower level needs; increasingly they work to fulfill higher level needs. This is particularly true of the better educated, since higher levels of education increase the individual's desire for interesting work, influence on work decisions, and greater skill utilization,

all of which contribute to the satisfaction of the higher level needs. More education also leads to expectations of higher rewards in the workplace, which in turn leads to job dissatisfaction if those expectations are not met (Locke & Whiting, 1974; Gordon & Arvey, 1975; Kanter, 1978; Lawler, 1985).

An important finding is that it does not seem to matter whether the conditions that lead to needs fulfillment are really present - what matters is that the individual perceives that they are present. In other words, it is the individual's perception of reality that determines his or her behavior. Furthermore, patterns of variations suggest that perceived needs fulfillment in the workplace is the result of many influences, including demographics such as age (Gibson & Klein, 1970) and sex (Glenn, Taylor & Weaver, 1977); personal attributes, such as education and occupational level (Lawler, 1985), and organization environmental characteristics which relate to whether the organization is public or private, such as political influence (Buchanan, 1974); and collegiality (Chubb & Moe, 1985).

Needs Fulfillment of Academics

Although the needs fulfillment of workers in business and industry have been studied extensively, considerably fewer researchers have addressed the needs of educators. For a long time, it was considered inappropriate to apply management theories and techniques to educational institutions (Tucker, 1984). When attitudes changed and workers in academia were studied empirically, it was found that faculty and administrators are subject to the same tensions as their counterparts in nonacademic organizations, with the added pressure of public scrutiny and greater demands of accountability.

Most of the higher education job satisfaction research has focused on

faculty (Wood, 1976; Baldridge, Curtis, Ecker & Riley, 1978; Kanter, 1979; Onuoha, 1980; Riday, Bingham & Harvey, 1984-85). Recent studies indicate that as financial pressures on their institutions increase, faculty carry heavier workloads, find less opportunities for advancement and face greater insecurities. In view of this, the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) saw fit to express that "it is fortunate that such instrinsic aspects of their work as autonomy and freedom, intellectual exchange, and the opportunity to work with students relate most strongly to faculty members' satisfaction" (Austin & Gamson, 1983). However, as the composition of college students changes (older, more diverse, less prepared academically) faculty are finding it increasingly difficult to reap the intrinsic rewards of their profession. One in-depth study has found that college and university faculty are so dissatisfied with their profession that as many as 40 percent would leave academe if they could (Jacobson, 1985).

The results of two studies conducted during the 1970s suggest that some administrators may fare better than faculty. Stewart (1973) studied the needs fulfillment of administrators in the community college systems of Florida and Virginia and found that the higher the level of the administrator's position the greater the amount of his or her perceived needs fulfillment. Solmon and Tierney (1977) also found that the presidents and deans of 22 liberal arts colleges were more satisfied with their work than lower level administrators, such as directors of admissions or registrars. These findings concur with those of studies on the perceived needs fulfillment of different levels of managers in business and industry (Porter, 1961; Porter & Lawler, 1968, HEW, 1973, cited in Chung, 1977).

There is some evidence that this may be changing. In 1980, college and

university presidents reported general satisfaction with their work (Kauffman, 1980). Four years later, however, an in-depth study of 800 college and university presidents conducted by the Commission on Strengthening Presidential Leadership of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (Jacobson, 1984) revealed that increasing external pressures, lack of support, and diminishing intrinsic and extrinsic rewards have seriously adversely affected the quality of the worklife of these chief executive officers.

How Satisfied are Department Chairpersons?

At all colleges and universities major decisions regarding curriculum, program offerings, and hiring, promotion and tenure recommendations are made by faculty under the leadership of department chairpersons. It is at the departmental level that colleges and universities respond to external pressures, such as those generated by business and industry, and that the consequences of institutional budget constraints are felt most acutely (Booth, 1982). Yet, the needs of these academic "middle managers" receive scant attention.

One reason for this neglect may be that identifying the particular needs of department chairpersons poses a special challenge. At most campuses, department chairpersons consider themselves and are perceived by faculty (and by faculty collective bargaining units) as teachers and scholars rather than as administrators (Tucker, 1984); at the same time presidents and deans tend to regard them as administrators who serve as linking-pins between the faculty and the administration (Booth, 1982). Very few department chairpersons are told outright which of the two roles they are

expected to assume (Hammons, 1984).

Another problem is that although department chairpersons are held accountable for important decisions, the limits of their authority are rarely clearly defined.. They are expected to implement policy, but they seldom are involved in making policy decisions (Bragg, 1980; Richardson, Jr. and Rhodes, 1983).

The difficulties created by the confusion about the chairpersons' roles and responsibilities are aggravated by the indefinite tenure of the position. Two researchers surveyed 32 public universities and found that one-half of all chairs in those institutions had been in office less than four years (McLaughlin and Montgomery, 1976). Tucker (1984) notes that the turnover rate for department chairs in the State University System of Florida is approximately 15 to 20 percent per year. Bowers (1980, cited in Booth, 1982) found that 15 percent of mathematics department chairs had held their positions less than one year. While turnovers are due to a variety of reasons including prescribed terms of office, death, illness and retirement, at least one research team has found that many are due to the ambiguities of the role and authority of the position (Pfeffer & Moore, 1980).

In the absence of adequate research, it is difficult to determine just how satisfied or dissatisfied department chairpersons really are. Most researchers approach the subject indirectly. Tucker (1984) surveyed a group of department chairpersons and found that 90 percent of them were sufficiently satisfied to say that they would agree to serve another term if invited to do so. Bragg (1980) and Hammons (1984) found that department chairpersons stay on the job because they hope to accomplish something worthwhile for their department and at the same time satisfy higher level

personal needs, such as for achievement and self-realization. These researchers did not ask the chairpersons whether or not they had achieved their goals, but they did inquire about sources of job related frustrations. The chairpersons in Bragg's study complained about the inability to keep up with their academic discipline and the difficulty of maintaining faculty effectiveness. The chairpersons interviewed by Hammons placed inadequate role definition at the top of their list of frustrations, and followed with lack of opportunity for professional growth, inadequate budget for program development, and less than satisfactory communication with top administrators. These studies, though limited, suggest that the personal goals of department chairpersons are generally not being met in the workplace.

The Puerto Rico Setting

If studies that focus on the needs of department chairpersons in American colleges and universities are scarce, in Puerto Rico, until the present study, they are nonexistent. Only a handful of studies on job satisfaction in higher education have ever been conducted on the island, and these have been exclusively of faculty and primarily at one institution - the University of Puerto Rico (Garcia-Lopez, 1982; Pacheco, 1982; Comision de, 1985).

Because of Puerto Rico's close political ties with the United States, not surprisingly, its higher education institutions are very similar in structure and mission to their counterparts on the mainland. The roles and responsibilities of department chairpersons, therefore, are comparable. Nevertheless, there is one difference that must be taken into consideration

when comparing the job satisfaction/ dissatisfaction of the two groups of chairpersons. And that is that two kinds of external pressures affect Puerto Rican institutions - and their workers - more acutely than they do institutions in the United States: economic constraints (especially affect private institutions) and political interference (especially affect public institutions).

Some readers might ponder whether cultural differences between the Puerto Rican and North American societies should also be considered. However, most motivation theorists agree that basic human needs are universal, and cross-cultural studies on the job satisfaction of industrial workers in other parts of the world consistently find that workers with comparable educational backgrounds seek to satisfy the same basic needs in the workplace (Haire, Ghiselli & Porter 1966; Ajiferuke & Boddewyn, 1970; Slocum & Topichak, 1972; Howell, Strauss, & Sorenson, 1975; Takezawa, 1982; Kiggundu, Jorgensen, & Hafsi, 1983).

The Present Study

Population studied. The population studied were 114 department chairpersons at 13 four-year colleges in Puerto Rico. Eight of these colleges are private and five are public. They have a combined enrollment of 47,000 students--the largest institution has approximately 8,000 students and the smallest around 900. Three of the five private institutions are church related--two Catholic and one Seventh Day Adventist. These 13 institutions essentially comprise all the acredited comprehensive four-year colleges on the island.

Conceptual framework. Porter (1961) modified Maslow's hierarchy of

needs theory by eliminating the lowest level need, i.e. physiological, and introducing autonomy as next to the highest level need. Porter reasoned that the physiological (i.e. biological) needs of workers today are generally met so it is not necessary to include them in the hierarchy. However, the need for autonomy is generally not met and therefore should be included. This modified version of Maslow's theory provided the framework for the present study.

The research design. The method employed to collect the data was the survey and included a self-administered questionnaire (89% response) and face-to-face interviews with 36 (32%) of the department chairpersons.

The questionnaire was comprised of three parts. Part I measured the perceived fulfillment of the five needs identified by Maslow/Porter: Security, Social Affiliation, Self-Esteem, Autonomy and Self-Realization. This first part was essentially the Need Fulfillment Questionnaire designed by Porter (1961) for measuring job satisfaction among managers in industry. The instrument consists of 11 questions designed to elicit responses regarding three aspects of the five needs - fulfillment, satisfaction and importance. The format of the instrument is such that the respondents were not asked directly about these need aspects. First, a statement was made that relates to one of the needs, as for example "The opportunity to develop close friendships in my position as department chair" (which relates to the affiliation need). Then three questions regarding that statement were asked: a) How much is there now? b) How much should there be? and c) How important is this to me? The department chairs were asked to respond to a, b, and c by checking a 7-point scale, where 1 indicates a minimum response and 7 indicates a maximum response. Their response to a (Is Now)

measured the Need Fulfillment aspect; the difference between their responses to a and b (Is Now-Should be) measured the Need Satisfaction aspect; and their response to c (Important) measured the Need Importance aspect.

There were several compelling reasons for using Porter's Need Fulfillment Questionnaire for this study. Among these are that the instrument has been found to be valid and reliable by the University of Michigan Survey Research Center and that it was designed specifically to measure the fulfillment needs of managers. Another reason is that it has been used in at least 14 different cultural settings, including two Spanish speaking countries. A Spanish translation of the instrument was used in Spain by Haire and his associates (1966) and in Mexico by Slocum and Topichak (1972). Although most of the department chairpersons in Puerto Rican institutions have at least a reading knowledge of English, many feel more comfortable answering questions about their jobs in their first language, which is Spanish.

For the present study, the Spanish version of Porter's instrument was modified to adjust it to the Spanish that is spoken in Puerto Rico. The researcher changed some of the vocabulary herself and then had a Spanish professor at the Aguadilla Regional College of the University of Puerto Rico review it and suggest further changes if necessary. The modified/corrected Spanish instrument was then given to a bilingual English department faculty member who translated it back into English (without having access to the original English version). Her translation was then compared with Porter's original English version to see if the modification process had altered the original questionnaire in any significant way. Where any discrepencies were

found, the researcher made appropriate changes in the Spanish version so that it would coincide with the original document as much as possible. These turned out to be minimal.

Part II of the questionnaire consisted of nine items that measured the department chairpersons' perceptions of four organizational characteristics that are found to influence perceived needs fulfillment and are related to whether the institution is public or private. These characteristics are: 1) opportunity to participate in decision making; 2) consistency with which the institution meets expectations in areas important to respondents; 3) existence of collegiality; and 4) influence of outsiders on matters of importance to the institution. As with Part I, the items were randomly arranged and department chairs were asked to answer each question by responding to a 7-point scale, where 1 indicated a minimum response and 7 indicated a maximum response.

Part III of the instrument consisted of 10 questions pertaining to demographics and personal attributes of the respondents. They included questions about their sex, age, highest earned degree, where they studied, academic major, years of service at the institution where now employed, whether the institution is public or private, years as department chairperson, and whether they have a tenured faculty position.

Appropriate steps were taken to assure the validity and realiability of the instrument.

The interviews. The primary purpose of conducting the interviews was to probe more deeply into the responses provided in the self-administered questionnaire. To that end the researcher studied the completed questionnaires that arrived early and, after analyzing the results,

prepared a series of questions that would shed further light on the responses. For example, the preliminary data indicated that women department chairs perceived greater self-esteem need fulfillment than men department chairs, so in order to confirm this phenomenon, the researcher asked men and women department chairs to rank order the five needs and to explain why they put them in that order. She also asked them what aspects of their jobs they liked most and which they liked least. In that way she was able to detect if women considered the fulfillment of the self-esteem need a more important goal than men did, and if they preferred tasks that enhanced their self-esteem more than men did. In like manner, since the preliminary data indicated that collegiality seemed to exist to a greater degree in private than in public colleges, the researcher asked department chairs in both sectors to provide examples of collegiality at their institution, and to explain why this environmental characteristic was or was not important to them.

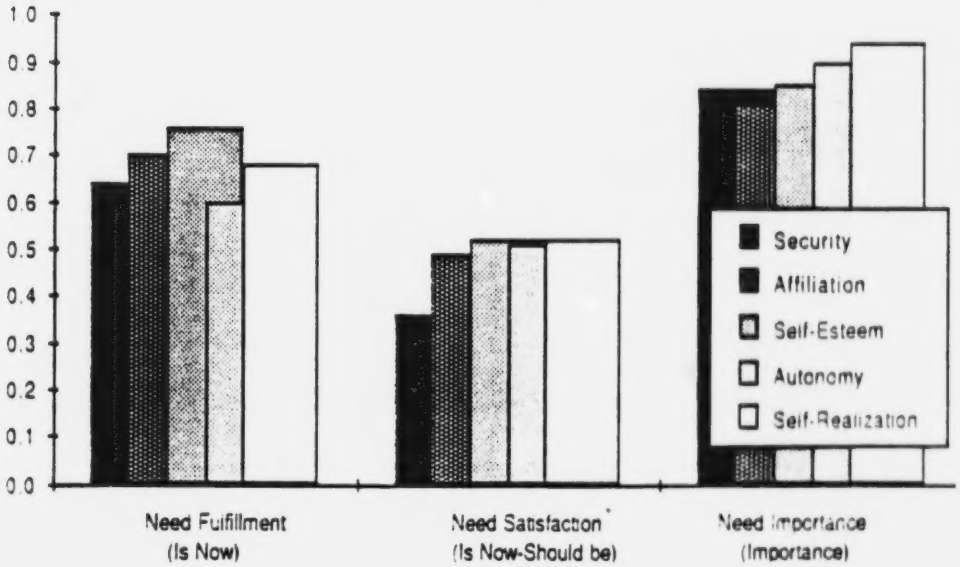
All the persons interviewed were asked the same questions and as they responded the researcher checked off their answers in a pre-prepared list of anticipated responses. However, responses to several open-ended questions, generated discussions on certain topics that were not included in all the interviews.

Results. The data were analyzed quantitatively (using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), and qualitatively. As the following Table and Figure demonstrate, the department chairpersons studied perceive that Self-Esteem is the most fulfilled need (i.e. is met in the workplace) and Autonomy the least fulfilled need. With regard to need satisfaction (the difference between what is met and what should be met in the workplace)

TABLE 1. ASPECTS OF NEEDS

	Need Fulfillment (Is Now)	Need Satisfaction (Is now - Should be)	Need Importance	No. of Cases
Security	.64	.36	.84	97
Affiliation	.70	.49	.81	96
Self-Esteem	.76	.52	.85	97
Autonomy	.60	.51	.90	95
Self-Realization	.68	.52	.94	96

FIGURE 1
Aspects of Needs



they seem to be equally satisfied with four of the needs, but considerably less satisfied with the Security need. As expected of college-educated professionals, Self-Realization is perceived as the most important need, and Autonomy the next important. Nevertheless, according to the hierarchy-of-needs theory, only when lower-level needs are satisfied do higher level needs become important, so the fact that the department chairs ranked the Security need higher in importance than the Affiliation need suggests a deficiency in the fulfillment of the lowest-level need - a conclusion that was reenforced during the interviews. The chairpersons were asked by the researcher to rank order the five needs in terms of importance, and all but two of the 36 chairpersons interviewed put Security at the top of the list. Several volunteered that low salaries and absence of tenure (primarily at the private institutions) forced them to be continually concerned with this lower-level need.

When the respondents were divided into categories (by age, sex, highest degree earned, etc.), significant differences in their responses were noted, for example:

1) Department chairpersons who are 39 years of age or older consider the Security and the Affiliation needs to be more important than those who are younger than 39 years of age, and they perceive that their institutions meet expectations that are important to them more consistently than younger chaipersons do.

2) Women perceive greater Self-Esteem Need Fulfillment than men, but men perceive greater Self-Esteem Need Satisfaction than women.

3) Women consider the Security need to be more important than men.

4) Chairpersons with doctorates perceive greater satisfaction with the

Self-Realization need than those without doctorates.

5) Chairpersons whose academic preparation is in technical/vocational fields perceive greater Need Fulfillment with regard to Self-Esteem than those with academic backgrounds in the arts and sciences.

6) Chairpersons with tenure are more secure in all three need aspects. They perceive greater fulfillment and satisfaction with the Security need and consider it a more important need than do nontenured chairpersons.

7) Chairpersons in the private colleges perceive greater Need Fulfillment with regard to Affiliation than chairpersons in the public colleges, and they also consider Affiliation a more imporant need than their counterparts in the public sector.

8) Chairpersons in private colleges perceive greater institutional autonomy than chairpersons in the public colleges.

A multiple regression analysis was computed to determine if the variations of the perceived needs fulfillment of the department chairs could be predicted or explained by the four organization environmental characterstics considered: participation in decision making, collegiality, consistency in expectations met, and external influences on the institution. It was found that 39 percent of the variation of the Need Fulfillment for Security could be explained by the expectations met characteristic; 28 percent of the variation of the Affiliation need by the collegiality characteristic; 50 percent of the variation of the Self-Esteem need by decision making; 56 percent of the variation of the Autonomy need could be explained by three characteristics, decision making, expectations met and external influences, and 55 percent of the variation of the Self-Realization need could be explained by decision making, collegiality, and external

influences.

Conclusions. The fact that the chairpersons studied are relatively satisfied with the higher level needs but not with the lowest level Security need, does not concur with the results of studies of managers or professionals elsewhere which consistently indicate that lower level needs are generally satisfied in the workplace, but that higher level needs are often not met (Porter, 1963; Porter & Lawler, 1968; Stewart, 1973). The results of the present study suggest that department chairpersons in Puerto Rico may be more concerned with salary, tenure, and working conditions (facets of the Security need) than with professional activities that would enhance their administrative or academic capabilities. The effect of this behavior on the achievement of institutional goals cannot be overestimated.

This study found that environmental differences exist between private and public institutions in Puerto Rico, similar to the differences that are found to exist between public and private institutions in the United States. The private colleges studied were found to provide department chairpersons with more opportunities for participation in decision making than their counterparts at the public colleges. Chairpersons in the private institutions reported that their opinions were taken into consideration and they had greater access to their deans and presidents more often than the chairpersons in the public colleges. There also appears to be a more collegial atmosphere at the private colleges than at the public colleges. Among other things, more chairpersons from the private schools than from the public schools, mentioned getting together socially with their colleagues and collaborating with them on special projects.

Finally, the respondents indicated that outside groups influence

institutional decisions in the public sector to a much greater extent than in the private sector. During the interviews, chairpersons in both sectors commented on the adverse affect of political interference on the public colleges (e.g. after the 1984 general elections most of the administrators - including department chairpersons - at the University of Puerto Rico were replaced by members of the party in power).

In view of this reality, an unexpected finding was that the turnover of department chairs in the private sector within the last three years was almost as great as in the public sector. One reason for this may be that private colleges, in order to cut costs, have considerably less department chairpersons than do public colleges of comparable sizes and the department chairpersons are overworked. Several of the department chairs from the private colleges mentioned during the interviews, that they resent not having time to pursue professional interests, such as attending meetings, reading journals, or writing articles.

Because the above-mentioned environmental characteristics were found to significantly influence the perceived needs fulfillment of the chairpersons studied, the above findings have obvious and important implications for the presidents and deans of the institutions studied. It behooves them all (from the public and private sectors) to look for ways to enhance the working environments of their respective institutions. Sometimes external forces (e.g. excessive bureaucracy, political interference, economic limitations) that are detrimental to the fulfillment of basic needs in the workplace are beyond the control of an individual organization, but sensitive and creative administrators can and should develop strategies to compensate for these negative influences.

Recommendations: The finding that department chairpersons in Puerto Rico perceive higher level needs as being satisfied to a greater degree than they do lower level needs, especially Security, should be explored further to see if, in fact, the findings of this study can be confirmed. Are the higher level needs really being satisfied, or is it that they are not a concern to the chairpersons as long as their lower level needs are not adequately met? Furthermore, since this is the first job satisfaction study of higher education administrators in Puerto Rico, the perceived needs fulfillment of administrators at other types of institutions (universities, community colleges) on the island should also be investigated.

Finally, given the lack of information about the perceived needs fulfillment of department chairpersons in general and given the increasing pressures on these professionals (due to enrollment trends, retrenchment policies, increased accountability etc.), similar studies should be conducted at stateside institutions.

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